

Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

#BXNRY *****
#0000 2910 1011#

#005 DT#
SOUTHERN BAPT HISTORICAL SOC 5942 P2
901 COMMERCE ST STE 401
NASHVILLE TN 37203-3620

ED SINCE 1877

JANUARY 8, 2004

VOL. 128

No. 2

YEC draws standing room only crowd

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

A near-record crowd of Mississippi Baptist young people and their leaders flooded Mississippi College in Clinton and its cross-street neighbor, First Church, Clinton, on December 29-30 for the 2003 Mississippi Baptist Youth Evangelism Conference (YEC) — and anyone who didn't get there plenty early quickly found themselves facing a standing room only situation.

dinators for several years and produce the event for the MBCB Evangelism Department.

"I was excited that more than 25% of the churches that brought their young people to the conference were there for the first time. We had 20 professions of faith and about 10 other decisions," said Fletcher.

Of particular interest to Fletcher was the positive response to the breakout session for adult leaders of youth programs in Mississippi Baptist churches — the first year such a session had been held in conjunction with YEC.

"There were over 350 adults at this first-time session. That really got me pumped up. That session went well beyond our expectations and will be repeated in future years," he said.

Featured speakers for the conference were youth evangelist Landon Dowden of River Ridge, La., and Adam Robinson of Sterrett, Al. Popular Dove Award-winning Christian band By the Tree provided worship music.

Breakout session leaders included:

- Jim Jackson, who led seventh and eighth graders.
- Gary Permenter, who led ninth graders.
- Landon Dowden, who led tenth graders.

• Adam Robinson, who led eleventh and twelfth grades.

• Daniel Hall, who led adults.

Fletcher expressed appreciation to the personnel of Mississippi College and First Church, Clinton, who he said worked long hours to prepare for the conference. "They went the extra mile," he said.

Fletcher also offered special thanks to Chick-Fil-A, which provided 3,200 coupons for free food to conference participants.



REACH EVERYONE — Jim Jackson exhorts seventh- and eighth-grade attendees at the 2003 Mississippi Baptist Youth Evangelism Conference to be inclusive when sharing the Gospel with others and worshipping in their churches. Jackson's session was held in the New Sanctuary of First Church, Clinton. (BR photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

Members of the 2003 Mississippi Baptist Youth Conference planning committee, in addition to Adkins, Fletcher, and Slover, included:

- Jay Albritton of First Church, Vicksburg.
- Todd Cole of First Church, Terry.
- Christie McIlwain of First Church, McComb.
- Jon Kittrell of Shuqualak Church, Shuqualak.
- Lori Schuler, Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union.
- Clinton White, Bayou Vista Church, Gulfport.

• Jenny Ellis, MBCB Evangelism Department.

Adkins said he was concerned that the heavy rains on the first day of the conference would dampen attendance. "Mississippi Baptist young people and their leaders still turned out in record numbers, and that says something about the state of youth ministry in Mississippi," Adkins pointed out.

The 2004 Mississippi Baptist Youth Evangelism Conference will be held at Mississippi College and First Church, Clinton, on December 30-31.



INTO THE WORLD — Youth evangelist Adam Robinson of Sterrett, Al., makes a point during the December 30 afternoon worship session of the 2003 Mississippi Baptist Youth Evangelism Conference in A.E. Wood Coliseum on the campus of Mississippi College in Clinton. Robinson was one of the featured speakers at the annual event sponsored by the Evangelism Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. (BR photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

"We registered 2,600-plus people for the conference. If that's not a new record, we came real close," said Sonny Adkins, evangelism director for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB). The board's Evangelism Department sponsors the annual two-day event, which is funded by gifts to the Mississippi Cooperative Program.

Planners worked in 2003 to alleviate overcrowding problems that cropped up around the near-record attendance at the 2002 event, Adkins said. "Overcrowding is a good problem to have, but it was obvious we needed more space if we were going to continue to grow. Mississippi College and First Church, Clinton, were very eager to provide us with the additional space we needed," he pointed out.

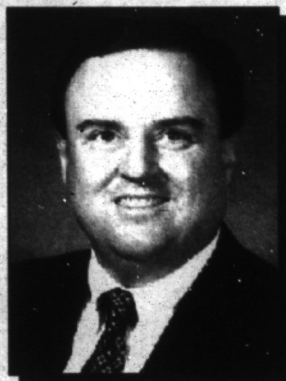
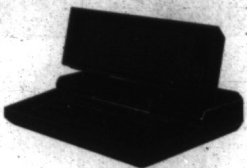
Jay Fletcher, minister to students at First Church, Clinton, and Shannon Slover, minister to students at First Church, Laurel, have served as co-coor-



PACKED HOUSE — More than 2,600 young people from Mississippi Baptist churches crowd the stage as Christian band By the Tree performs December 30 at the annual Mississippi Baptist Youth Evangelism Conference in A.E. Wood Coliseum on the campus of Mississippi College in Clinton. (BR photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

SANCTITY OF
HUMAN LIFE
SUNDAY
JANUARY 18

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



**William H.
Perkins Jr.**
Editor

EDITOR
William H. Perkins Jr.

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Tony Martin

EDITORIAL ASSOCIATE
Anne Ranson

LAYOUT/DESIGN
Lennie N. Young

ADVERTISING
Dana Richardson

CIRCULATION MANAGER
Brenda Quattlebaum

BOOKKEEPER
Betty Anne Bailey

EDITOR EMERITUS
Don McGregor

Baptist Record Advisory Committee:
Mack Amis, McComb
James Beasley, Crystal Springs
Al Green Jr., Bay St. Louis
Rick Henson, Brandon
Beverly Pyron, Natchez
Billy Watkins, Madison
Dana Richardson, secretary

Postmaster: Send changes of address to The BAPTIST RECORD, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Send news, communication, and address changes to The Editor, BAPTIST RECORD, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530 (601) 968-3800. Fax: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org

VOLUME 128 NUMBER 2
(ISSN-0005-5778)

Published weekly except weeks of July 4 and Christmas by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, 515 Mississippi Street, Jackson, MS 39201. Subscription \$9.35 per year payable in advance. Economy plans available for cooperating Mississippi churches. Periodicals postage paid at Jackson, MS. Member, Association of State Baptist Papers. Deadlines: News items — one calendar week prior to requested publication date. Advertising — two calendar weeks prior to requested publication date.

The future of marriage in America

On the warm, windswept first Saturday of the new year, a young bride and groom were married in a Mississippi Baptist church. It was a scene undoubtedly repeated many times on that Saturday in many other venues around the country, but we seem to never grow tired of this age-old celebration of unfailing love and lifetime commitment.

The ceremony began, right on time. The bride was radiant; the groom was beaming. Within minutes, they were no longer two individuals but one entity in the eyes of God. The ensuing reception in the church's Family Life Center featured the finest white tablecloths on which food and drink were placed from one end of the building to the other.

A good time was had by all. At the end the newlyweds headed off for their week-long honeymoon cruise and, beyond that, into a lifetime of love and devotion. The challenges of marriage and the tragedies of life will have to be faced down the road, but all of that can be put aside for this brief, shining moment when God is on His throne and everything is right with the world.

The wedding ceremony is important to us, because it is symbolic of how seriously we take the concept of marriage. That's the real reason we travel great distances and go to such great expense to be a part of such weddings.

There are people in the America of today, however, who would degrade the God-ordained marital union of one man and one woman for life. There are those who would have us believe that marriage is not special or God-ordained at all, but rather a common "commitment" or "union" between people of whatever genders and sexual preferences suit them at the moment.

There are political, judicial, and cultural leaders in America who shamelessly excuse such sinful and immoral behavior and even boast of their efforts to normalize

perverse relationships (Romans 1:32). Commentators have begun to observe that future generations of Americans will likely have a completely different concept of marriage than we do today.

In the world of tomorrow, marriage will mean anything anyone wants it to mean. Homosexual and lesbian marriage will have the same status as heterosexual marriage, but so will marriages between multiple partners, simultaneous marriages, and marriages between adults and children. There may even be legally-recognized marriages between humans and animals. (Don't laugh; who would have thought we would have gone as far as we have?)

This is merely one battle among many in the war with the secularists and elitists who would destroy foundational institutions like marriage and the way of life that goes with it, simply so that they can live as they please. However, the American people aren't buying it. A recent New York Times/CBS News poll indicates that the American people are very much in favor of protecting the traditional understanding of marriage.

The poll indicates that Americans oppose legalized same-sex marriages by 61%-34%, and support a constitutional amendment to enshrine the traditional understanding of marriage (55%-40%). Obviously, our liberal leaders are out of step with the Americans they are supposed to be leading.

Christians must get involved to have their voices heard on this matter. Otherwise, we will be relegated to the fringes as we have been on so many other important issues of our day.

First, let us get our own marriages in order. It is embarrassing and shameful that the divorce rate among Christians is just as high as it is for non-Christians. Only when we practice what we preach will people start to pay attention.

The concept of marriage is worth the fight. May we not fail at this crucial task.

AN ASTEROID ZOOMS BY



SO THAT'S THE
PLACE HEAVEN IS
SO CONCERNED
ABOUT!



SEE THE EASY

Mom's not going to look comfortable in that casket.

That's the newest euphemistic phrase of the American funeral industry, according to an article in The New York Times this fall.

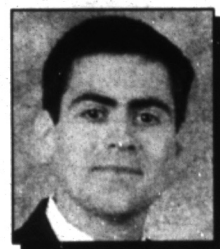
The carefully crafted phrase is a way to tell grieving family members that their loved one will require a larger-than-standard casket. According to The Times, funeral directors are saying it more and more. In fact, the article notes that a new industry is emerging around the widening waists of American corpses.

The Goliath Casket Company now designs and ships across the country triple-wide caskets, designed to accommodate up to 700 pounds. The Cremation Association of North America has special training sessions on "the handling of obese bodies."

Coffin builder David Hazelett tells The Times he sees no end in sight for this new feature of the old industry. "The economic opportunity exists until the country changes," he notes. "We're just reacting to the super-sizing of America."

A growing number of Americans are dangerously ravaged by an excess of food. This problem is symptomatic of an affluence that can kill us — physically, culturally and spiritually.

GUEST OPINION:



Too fat for our graves

By Russell D. Moore
Instructor of Christian Theology
Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

Moses speaks of the nation of Israel growing fat off the milk and honey of the land inheritance (Deuteronomy 31:20). He speaks of it as a fatness that signifies a satisfaction with abundance, a lack of daily dependence on Yahweh, and thus the foundation for idolatry.

Likewise, the Apostle Paul warns that when human beings turn from the Creator, they find a god in their own stomachs (Philippians 3:19).

The funeral industry's "size crisis" ought to rattle American Christians as to the unprecedented affluence of the culture we are seeking to claim for Christ. After all, how can a culture understand dependence on the Father for daily bread when we are already, quite literally, too fat for our graves?

Christ Jesus revealed the peril of living in such abundance as this. Addressing a crowd of thousands, Jesus recounted the parable of a rich fool, who said to himself "relax, drink, be merry" (Luke 12:13-21). What the affluent one was not expecting, Jesus noted, was the certainty of death and the reality of judgment. In the end, Jesus warned, the pursuit of comfort and affluence might deaden our consciences to the certainty of death — but it cannot stave it off.

Could it be that the unprecedented fatness of American society is not just about our material abundance, but about our spiritual poverty as well? A people who have lost hope in the age to come can only find comfort in satisfying our created urges, so we are addicted to sex, to fame

and even to food. We can't find what we're looking for, so we "super-size" all that we have.

The answer to this is not more innovation from the funeral industry, nor is it another "Christian" weight loss program. The answer to this hopelessness is instead churches fueled with a vision of the hope of the coming Kingdom of Christ.

To a contemporary society starving in its own fatness, our churches can herald the day when the Messiah will gather His people together for "a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine" (Isaiah 25:6, ESV). To a contemporary society scared to death of what lies beyond the Goliath casket, our churches can point to the day in which our resurrected Messiah will "swallow up death forever" (Isaiah 25:8).

It is, after all, this messianic banquet for which we are all really longing. That banquet will finally put an end to super-sized fast food, fad crash diets, and obesity police — but it will also put an end to the funeral industry.

That's worth celebrating, maybe even with a good meal.

Moore is a native of Biloxi. His commentary appears courtesy of Baptist Press.

Southern Baptists focus on New York City

NEW YORK (BP) — When missionary Jeremiah Lamphier started a prayer meeting in lower Manhattan in 1857, it sparked a spiritual awakening that eventually spread across the world. Leaders of Southern Baptists' New Hope New York effort — along with thousands of prayer warriors across the country — are hoping to see God move in similar ways over the next two years.

New Hope New York is the latest embodiment of the North American Mission Board (NAMB) Strategic Focus Cities initiative, an effort to direct Southern Baptist prayer, volunteers and other resources toward reaching the nation's largest cities with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

While New Hope New York leaders would not assume God would work exactly the same way He did in 1857, the effort does represent unprecedented opportunities for Southern Baptists to help spark renewal in one of the world's most influential cities.

"The significance of New York cannot be overstated," said Rich Carney, a Strategic Focus Cities planning coordinator for NAMB. "If we can reach the hearts and minds of New Yorkers, we affect the whole world. That is what's so exciting — and it's also very humbling."

The emphasis also comes at a point when experience in other Strategic Focus Cities provides a strong foundation. Since its launch in 2000, more than 45,000 people have accepted Christ and more than 300 churches have been started in

Chicago, Phoenix, Las Vegas, Boston, Seattle, Philadelphia, and Miami. Future efforts already have been announced for Vancouver, British Columbia in Canada, and several other major U.S. cities are

Southern Baptists can make an impact — and working in partnership with other evangelicals with similar goals.

Over the past two years, in partnership with the 214 churches of the Metropolitan New York Baptist Association, New Hope New York leaders have developed a five-pronged strategy:

- **Prayer.** "Prayer is our foundational strategy because being in alignment with God's will and seeking His specific direction in all areas is absolutely essential," Howard said. The PrayNewYork.com website was launched in the summer of 2002 as a way for individuals to stay connected with the effort through regular updates on prayer needs.

- **Church Planting.** If thousands of individuals are going to come to Christ, new churches will be needed to reach and disciple them, Howard said.

Howard said they hope to see at least three to five additional examples of what he calls "church planting centers," churches launched with a large commitment of staff and financial resources that within a few years could be sponsoring new churches themselves. There also will be opportunities for planting other churches of all sizes and types, Howard said.

- **Church Strengthening.** Efforts to provide training and other resources for existing churches not only will help them grow stronger and more effective in reaching their communities but increase the likelihood they will be able to start new congregations in areas of need. "Healthy churches have healthy babies," Howard said.

- **Collegiate Evangelism.** A key project in this area is The Leadership Journey, in which about a dozen collegiate min-

istry interns, working through local churches, will work on area campuses for six months. A related emphasis encourages development of "campus community churches" that will draw on the permanent college community while focusing on collegiate ministry.

- **Leadership Development.** LifeWay Christian Resources has partnered with New Hope New York to sponsor multiple training conferences, in addition to providing a variety of resources to area churches. NAMB's own Next Level Leadership Network is offering training and other resources.

NEW HOPE NEW YORK



GOOD NEWS FOR THE METRO AREA

in preparation stages as possible future Strategic Focus Cities candidates.

Dave Howard, city coordinator for New Hope New York, said that despite the challenges of reaching such a complex and diverse city, the 11 staff members of the ministry have focused on seeing where

Bowl evangelism set

HOUSTON, Texas (BP) — An anticipated 200,000 football fans will converge on Houston in the days prior to Super Bowl XXXVIII, and Southern Baptist Evangelism Project (SBEP) volunteers will be there to greet them with the Gospel message. That message will be presented in "overt" and "covert" ways, said SBEP director David Fannin, pastor of Nassau Bay Church in Houston. Some volunteers will be working in NFL and Super Bowl-sponsored venues. Although not able to use those forums for an open presentation of the Gospel to visitors, Fannin said SBEP volunteers can "put a good face on" their Christian faith and find opportunities to share that faith with coworkers when appropriate. For those wanting to be involved in the more "overt" witnessing, SBEP coordinators are sponsoring four workshops facilitated by North American Mission Board (NAMB) and Southern Baptist of Texas Convention staffers. The Evangelism Response Center (ERC), sponsored by NAMB, is a national resource geared to people seeking answers to their questions regarding faith in Jesus Christ. The Super Bowl Evangelism Project could broaden the base of volunteers for the program, noted Tim Knopps, director of the Timothy Institute of Evangelism and co-coordinator for SBEP. With training, volunteers can become phone counselors who, by calling into the ERC and punching in their personal access code, can receive calls from individuals seeking help via a toll-free phone number. The goal of the project is to connect callers with counselors in their general vicinity. The counselor can then recommend local churches for the caller to attend. Follow-up literature from NAMB will be sent to each caller. More information can be found at www.houstonnb.com.

Record

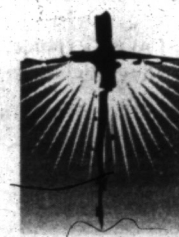
THE
SECOND
FRONT PAGE

PUBLISHED SINCE 1877

JANUARY 8, 2004

VOL. 128

No. 2



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

Looking back

10 years ago

A drop in designated gifts to the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board in Atlanta from its two major income sources in 1993 causes the agency to implement a temporary hiring freeze and conduct an internal study which may lead to "minimal" downsizing.

20 years ago

More than 1,500 young people register for the annual Mississippi Youth Evangelism Conference at Mississippi College in Clinton. Mississippi Baptist's Evangelism Director, Guy Henderson, reports 80 decisions during the December conference.

50 years ago

First Church, Hattiesburg, doubles the size of its property by acquiring the house and lot adjoining the church site at a cost of \$30,000. The new property gives the church a city block fronting West Pine Street, which is a main thoroughfare through the city.

Akin is top choice to head N.C. seminary

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP) — The Southeastern Seminary (SEBS) presidential search committee will recommend to the board of trustees the election of Daniel L. Akin as the seminary's sixth president. The board will meet in special session on Jan. 15 on the school's Wake Forest, N.C., campus to vote on Akin.



Akin

Akin, age 46, is currently the vice president for academic administration/dean of the school of theology at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky. He has connections to Southeastern, as he was professor of theology, dean of students, and vice president for student services at Southeastern from 1992-96.

Akin holds a Master of Divinity degree from Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Texas at Arlington and his Bachelor of Arts degree from Criswell College in Dallas.

Akin and his wife Charlotte have been married for 25 years and have four children.

I recently ran into a man whom I did not know, yet the encounter left a great impression on me and caused me to evaluate my own approach to life. The man was somewhere around 70 years of age, give or take a year or two. He was a distinguished looking fellow and he was wearing a button on his shirt. Now, I'm not talking about a little button like you button your shirt with. I'm talking about a BIG button about three inches across, circular, trimmed in red with one of those red slashes across it - the international sign of "Do Not!" or "Stop!"

Now, this white button with the red circle trim had the word "Whining" written across it. The message was clear - "Stop Whining!" I smiled at the man, nodded my head, and told him that I liked his pin. He replied, "Well, thank you! My daughter gave it to me." I said, "Your daughter!" "Yea, she says I whine too much!" was his reply. "Well, that's interesting. Why does she say that?" I asked. Thoughtfully, he said, "Probably because I do." From that point the man went on to share with me that the reason he wore the button that his daughter had given him was to have a constant reminder of a habit, a pattern, and a lifestyle that he had fallen into of simply whining about everything.

As I was standing there talking to this man whom I had never met, I began to think that he had reason to whine. According to him, he had been through some difficult health issues, lost a wife and some other family members, and his life had been turned upside down and inside out! Nothing



Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

was as it had been a few years ago in his life. So, what do you do when you get in that kind of shape? One option is to whine and apparently that is what his daughter thought he had reverted to too often.

We all are capable of whining. Adults, children, and kids that can't even talk can whine! It's not very becoming of any of us! In fact, during the hustle and bustle of the Christmas holidays, a mother of a whole brood of little kids was just beginning her shopping for that day. She came into the large department store, herding the crowd of kids along, when one of them decided that he wanted to go in a direction contrary to the rest of them. His mother proceeded to focus his attention on where he was supposed to be going and guess what - he commenced to whine! She stopped the whole crew of kids and said to this youngster, "Now, you remember that you only get one whine per day and you just used yours!" Mercy! She not only got the attention of that one youngster, but she got the attention of all the youngsters who were with her, and she even got my attention! What a good rule to have in your house - "one whine" per day!

I do not know of anyone who is excluded from occasional whining. Just watch the news and you can hear politicians

incessantly whining. Watch some sporting event and then listen to the coaches, the players, the fans (any and all) and you will probably get a good helping of whining! Go to school and listen to teachers, administrators, students, and parents and you'll get the picture. The "Stamp Out Whining" buttons would help immensely. Go to church and keep an ear open in the halls, maybe from the pulpit, in choir practice, or a committee meeting, and you might find whining has infected all of us!

What exactly does whining mean? I'm sure some child psychologist could give a seminar that would last several days explaining what is behind whining. I'm also sure there are many parents who would have a number of ideas as to what a child is expressing when whining. Right now, I want to narrow my remarks to "spiritual whining," or maybe a better and more accurate description would be "church whining."

Whining nearly always means, "I'm not getting my way!" or, "I want what I want and I want it right now!" When a child starts whining because he or she doesn't get a certain toy at the very moment they want it, it may be that a parent or responsible adult should explain to the child that they can have it later. They should

explain that what they are going to do is to learn the principle of sharing - everyone giving in a little bit and getting a little bit! Whether or not you have noticed with kids or adults, it doesn't seem to matter, a whiner is going to whine if they do not get what they want, when they want it, and like they want it!

Now, whining also indicates that the whiner does not believe that they will ever get their way unless they just wear everybody down with their incessant whimpering. Their reasoning is rather than trying logic, reasoning, appealing to rightness, or mature sharing, they immediately grab hold of the handle of whining and whop everybody over the head with it!

One other sad aspect of whining is the fact that it rarely, if ever, considers anyone else's needs or genuine desires. Whiners tend to ignore that others have great needs and totally discount the fact that maybe there is a greater good to the game. That's why, oftentimes, you see whiners wanting to be sure that everybody else's feelings are hurt and everyone else's experience is soured when they do not get their way. For the perpetual whiner getting their way is not the ultimate goal. Making sure that everybody else knows that they didn't get their way is the crowning touch!

Is there a cure for "Whinitis?" Yes there is, but it is not going to be found in just wearing a button or writing articles. It is a heart matter. It is a spiritual condition that only the powerful, life-changing, grace-giving Jesus can turn around for us! He can make a difference in us. He can turn our painful pandering of our small wills into gracious and God-honoring points of praise!

Committee: SBC should leave Baptist world body

NASHVILLE (ABP and BP) — A study committee is recommending that the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) withdraw its membership and funding from the Baptist World Alliance (BWA), the worldwide fellowship of 43 million Baptists, in order to create a more conservative international body. The committee's recommendation, if approved by the SBC Executive Committee during its Feb. 16-17 meeting in Nashville, would be forwarded to messengers at the SBC annual meeting June 15-16 in Indianapolis.

The SBC would maintain its current funding in the BWA until Oct. 1 of next year, according to the committee's recommendation. For a number of years, the SBC allocation to the BWA had been \$425,000 per year. The SBC's 2003-04 budget allocates \$300,000 to the BWA, an amount reduced by \$125,000 during last June's SBC annual meeting.

The \$125,000 was redirected to a new SBC Kingdom Relationships global initiative. The committee anticipates that the other \$300,000 will be similarly earmarked.

BWA General Secretary Denton Lotz, who labeled the proposal "a sin against love," warned that the recommendation "will bring a schism within the life of our worldwide Baptist family."

"The Scripture commands us to love one another," Lotz declared. "Schism is a sin against that unity which is necessary for evangelism."

A proposal drafted by a special study committee of SBC leaders accuses BWA of "advocating aberrant and dangerous theologies" and refusing to hear Southern Baptist objections. The proposal to withdraw accuses BWA of questioning biblical inerrancy, promoting women as pastors, and downplaying the doctrine of salvation only through Jesus.

"Continuing to allow presentations that call into question the truthfulness of Holy Scripture, refusing to support openly the idea that all who are saved must come to the salvation through conscious faith in Jesus Christ, and promoting women as preachers and pastors are among the issues that make it impossible to endorse the BWA as a genuinely representative organization of world Baptists," said the report of the BWA Study Committee released Dec. 19.

"The BWA rejects categorically this false accusation of liberalism," Lotz responded. "Of course there is a spectrum of theological thought in all of our conventions, just as in local churches, but we belong to one another because we belong to Christ."

"Every pastor and every deacon knows that nobody in their church agrees on everything," Lotz told Associated Baptist Press. "The main orthodox beliefs are crucial — the Trinity, the divinity of Christ, the cross, the resurrection, the Second Coming — that's who we are as Baptists."

Southern Baptists, who were instru-

mental in founding BWA in 1905 and have always been its largest member, also provide the lion's share of the organization's budget, which this year totaled \$1.69 million. The BWA cut its budget dramatically this year in response to the SBC's partial defunding.

Citing the report's claim that the BWA "seems poised to become 'a super-denomination,'" Lotz said, "I have never heard that in all my life. We emphasize so much the autonomy of the local church and of the national conventions. We are biblical and do believe we are bound together because we're bound to Christ."

The study committee's members include leaders who have been prominent in the conservative shift in the SBC, including four former SBC presidents:

— Morris Chapman, committee chairman, president of the SBC Executive Committee in Nashville.

— James Draper, president of Lifeway Christian Resources in Nashville.

— Tom Elliff, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church in Dell City, Ok.

— Paige Patterson, president of Southwestern Seminary in Ft. Worth.

Other committee members included retired Houston (Texas) judge Paul Pressler; Jerry Rankin, president of the International Mission Board Richmond, Va.; Joe Reynolds; Gary Smith; and Bob Sorrell.

Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx
copyright 2003

NGB TJTO AKT CGO GN

DEO REDT OGA AG HT

DLOLCATBTVOAG, HFA

AG DLOLCATB, EOY AG

SLJT KLC PLNT E

BECCGD NGB DEOX.

DEBY ATO: NGBAX-NLJT

Clue: J = V

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Luke 8:48

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

January 8, 2004

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Communication Services.

Deacon Ministry Emphasis

Deacon Ministry Emphasis . . .

is a plan with specific actions that highlight deacon ministries and involve deacon training and service.

The Purpose Of Deacon Emphasis Is To:

- ♦ Focus on their biblical role
- ♦ Build team relationships
- ♦ Secure involvement in ministries
- ♦ Develop skills for ministry

Deacon Emphasis Week is scheduled for January 11-18, 2004, but a deacon ministry emphasis may be conducted at any time during the year.

To participate, the deacons would choose at least two actions and perform them during a specified time (preferably during Deacon Emphasis Week). See the possible activities listed below.

A certificate of recognition will be presented to each deacon body that participates.

For other projects and information, contact:

Pastor/Leadership Development Department

Keith Gordon, consultant, (601) 968-3800, extension 307, or 1-800-748-1651

E-mail: kgordon@mbcb.org

MISSISSIPPI STATE EVANGELISM CONFERENCE

January 26-27, 2004

Country Woods BC

Jackson



WOMEN'S TRACK

A praise celebration for women that will inspire, motivate, equip and mobilize to share God's heart in Mississippi and beyond.

Sponsored by
Evangelism Department
Mississippi Baptist
Convention Board
S.A. Adkins, director

Locations

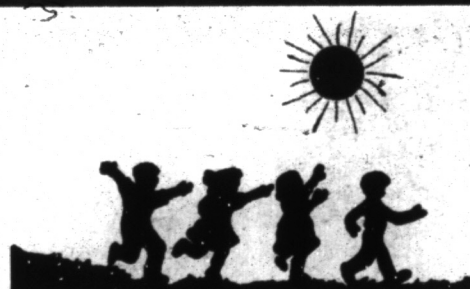
Highland BC, Meridian
February 7, 2004

FBC, Jackson
March 6, 2004

It is the desire of Mississippi Baptists to offer quality training for those who affect the lives of Mississippi's most precious citizens. Please make plans to attend the 2004 Christian Education Clinic of your choice. If you have any question, please call us:

Don Hicks, consultant
Discipleship & Family Ministry
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board
1-800-748-1651 or (601) 968-3800 in Jackson
dhicks@mbcb.org

DeAnna Blaylock, clinic coordinator
Christian Education Clinic
(601) 371-8822
dblalock@jam.rr.com



Mississippi Baptists
2004 Christian
Education Clinics

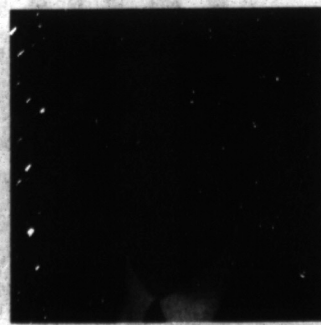
2004 Senior Adult Retreats



Guest Speaker:
Russell Newport
May 11-14, 2004
Cost: \$135



Guest Speaker:
Henry Lyons
May 17-19, 2004
Cost: \$100



Guest Speaker:
Jimmy Myles
May 17-19, 2004
Cost: \$100



Guest Speaker:
Bill Causey
Oct. 12-14, 2004
Cost: \$100

IMPORTANT:

A \$50 deposit per person is required to reserve a spot. Baptist churches in Mississippi may register with Gulfshore Baptist Assembly on or after Feb. 2, 2004. Out-of-state churches may register beginning April 1, 2004. For more information, call Gulfshore Baptist Assembly at 228-452-7261.

All
The
World
Is A
Stage...



conferences

- Drama
- Clowning
- Puppets
- Church Recreation
- Youth Ministry
- Media
- Missions

February 20-21, 2004
First Baptist Church, Madison

Cost: \$25 (early bird by January 23),
\$30 (after January 23)

Leader of groups of 10 or more get in free.
Registrations postmarked by Jan. 31 will be sent a list of
classes to help you plan your schedule.

*If you have any questions about
the festival, please contact
Harvey Ellis at
1-800-748-1651 or E-mail him at
hgellis@mbcb.org.*

celebrate
Focus on Missions
in your church
through WMU
organizations

February 9-15, 2004
let folks know that we

do missions
learn about missions
pray for and give to missions
develop spiritually toward a
missions lifestyle
participate in the work of the church
and the denomination

and thereby we
**Discover the Joy
of Missions®**

for more info, contact the Miss.
WMU at 601-292-3316, 1-800-748-
1651, or E-mail: nmason@mbcb.org



Worship Service

Sunday, January 25
Hillcrest BC, Byram, 6 p.m.

MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST
**SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA**

For more information, contact the MBCB
Church Music Department at
1-800-748-1651 or in Jackson, 601-292-3266.

2004 Family Life Conferences

FBC, Mize (Smith Association)

Sunday, Feb. 1, 8, 15 and 22

5-6 p.m.

For more information, call 601-733-2233

Monticello Baptist Church

(Lawrence Association)

Monday, Feb. 2

7-9 p.m.

For more information, call 601-587-2114

FBC, Byhalla (Marshall Association)

Thursday, Feb. 12

7-9 p.m.

For more information, call 662-838-4333

Tylertown Baptist Church

(Walthall Association)

Thursday, March 4

7-9 p.m.

For more information, call 601-876-3436

Marriage Enrichment

Lake Como Baptist Church, Bay Springs (Jasper Association)

Feb. 27-28

Special Guests: Ronnie and Beverly Cottingham

For more information, call 601-876-3436

2004 OPPORTUNITIES

For more information or a free brochure
contact the Discipleship and Family
Ministry Department at 1-800-748-1651 or
601-968-3800 in Jackson

JULY 22-24

Centri-Kid

2004

Enter at Your Own Risk!

ENTER

at your own risk!



Doors, doors, and more doors – which one do I enter? At 2004 Centri-Kid, enter the doors to learn how exciting the Bible really is!

Everyone has a choice to enter the Door. Everyone has the choice to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Enter the doors this summer at Centri-Kid – it'll be the most important step you'll ever take.

Centri-Kid offers a quality Christian camp experience for children who have completed grades 3-6, combining quality worship with age-appropriate activities designed – from start to finish – to reach children with the message of Jesus Christ.

Cost: \$1 35 per person

Small-group Bible study follows the morning celebration, helping each child focus on the theme for the day and life application of God's Word. From there, campers choose from a variety of creative and exciting courses – known as "tracks" – that allow them opportunity to develop their talents and interests.

For more information, contact the Sunday School Department at 1-800-748-1651, or in Jackson, 601-292-3292, or E-mail jellis@mbcb.org.

2004 BAPTIST DOCTRINE STUDY PREVIEWS

LED BY
RITA YANCY

BRUNCH AND PREVIEWS

January 19

First Baptist Church, Biloxi

January 20

Alta Woods Baptist Church

Jackson

January 22

First Baptist Church, Starkville

Doctrine of Jesus

9 a.m. – noon • Cost: \$10

For more information or to make reservations, contact the Discipleship and Family Ministry Department.

1-800-748-1651 • 601-292-3292

2004 GA & Adolescents Summer Camp

Camp Garaywa

GA Camp Dates

(Completed 6th Grade)

June 7-11

July 5-9

June 14-18

July 12-16

June 21-25

July 19-23

June 28-July 2

July 26-30

Adolescents Camp Dates

July 5-9

Registration
opens
March 1,
2004.

Cost is \$125
per person.

For more
information,
contact the state
WMU
Department at
1-800-748-1651
EXT. 3292 or in
Jackson at
601-292-3292.



VBS JumpStart 2004

For all • Pastors
• VBS directors • VBS leaders
1 Corinthians 9:24

Join Becky Martin from LifeWay on an unbelievable far-out VBS race through the streets of Tokyo or climbing Mt. Fuji to obtain the real prize – Jesus as Savior and Lord.

The VBS Rickshaw Rally sampler and curriculum will be on display and available for purchase from LifeWay Christian Stores.

February 9, 2004, 9 a.m. - 11 a.m.

FBC, 506 Jeff Davis Avenue
Long Beach, Miss.

February 10, 2004

9 a.m. - noon

Ridgecrest Baptist Church
7469 Old Canton Road
Madison, Miss.

February 10, 2004, 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Trinity BC, 7200 Swinnea Road
Southaven, Miss.

For more information, contact the Sunday School Department at 1-800-748-1651, or in Jackson, 601-292-3292, or E-mail jellis@mbcb.org.

Pray this day for...

January 9-22, 2004

Prayer Ministry Office • P.O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 601-292-3304 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1-800-787-7729 (PRAY)

"The greatest single cause of atheism in the world today is Christians who acknowledge Jesus with their lips, then walk out the door and deny Him by their lifestyle. That is what an unbelievable world simply finds unbelievable."

Brennan Manning

For: (1) Deacon Emphasis Week, 11th-17th (P/LD); (2) Pray for those missionaries who are concerned about the failing physical and/or mental health of ailing family members. Thank God for family members and others who provide the day to day care which they need when missionary children are far away.

For: (1) Sanctity of Human Life (CAC Emphasis); (2) Over 100 Thai came to know Jesus through the outreach of three mobile medical clinics in north-eastern Thailand and two clinics held south of Bangkok. The Eastern Regional Team asks: "Pray with us that those who responded in faith will know His power to save and keep."

Pray as new Chronological Bible Storying tapes are being made in Uruguay to share with new believers who do not read or cannot understand what they are reading well enough to do the disciple studies. Ask God to guide those who are involved in discipling these new Christians.

For: (1) Baptist Doctrine Study, FBC, Biloxi, 9 a.m.-noon (D&FM); (2) F.O.C.U.S. Groups, TBA (WMU); (3) Pray today for Prime Minister Thaksin Chinnawatt of Thailand (southeastern Asia).

Ashley Kelley is a university church planter in Canada. Pray that God will raise up leaders to help the church grow and that God brings many new converts to Him. Pray for a building to meet in and a full time pastor.

For: (1) F.O.C.U.S. Groups, TBA (WMU); (2) Baptist Doctrine Study, Alta Woods BC, Jackson, 9 a.m.-noon (D&FM); (3) Please pray for President Chen Shuibian of Taiwan (eastern Asia coast).

Join Team Belgium in giving thanks for the unity of a Russian-speaking home group in the northern part of the country. These believers remain united in their faith in spite of the constant threat of deportation.

The Philippine National Collegiate Team writes: "We praise the Lord for an excellent retreat in which 47 students received the Lord and many more began discipleship and training as evangelists. Please pray that the new believers will desire to grow in the Lord and become mighty witnesses to their own campuses."

For: (1) VBSI, Glorieta, 15th-17th (SS); (2) The Guarayos of Bolivia often feel that they must change from their culture to be accepted into society. Pray that they will realize that God gave them their culture and that he wants to meet them in it.

For: (1) Baptist Doctrine Study, FBC, Starkville, 9 a.m.-noon (D&FM); (2) Jon Hodge of Bartlett, Tenn., is a national missionary. Pray for him as he deals with recently discovered heart disease, and pray that positive progress will continue.

For: (1) Mississippi Baptist Symphony Orchestra Retreat, Madison Central High School, Madison, 9th-10th (CM); (2) Pray that the hearts of the people of Clifeng in Inner Mongolia would be opened to servants who carry the Gospel so that they will be ready to receive God's Word and experience new life in Christ.

For: (1) One Voice Retreat, 16th-17th (CM); (2) Chaplains Winter Retreat, Camp Garaywa, Clinton, 16th-17th (CPD); (3) Pray for adult MKs in the USA that they might let God lead in their lives in their decisions regarding education, professions, dating and marriage, church attendance, etc.

Remember in prayer Guy & Elena Key as they serve as missionaries in residence at Ouachita Baptist University. Ask God to guide them as they minister to the 92 MKs who attend Ouachita as well as to help DBU students catch a vision for Global Missions.

The Wassulu Team of Mali and Guinea request prayer for the physical health of their team. "Sickness has been a constant companion to anyone who has tried to minister in this area, and after doing pretty well, our entire team got sick within a two-day period. Pray that we would be protected from every form of illness so that we can be where we need to be to minister."

JUST FOR BIVOCATIONAL MINISTERS!

BIVOCATIONAL MINISTERS RETREAT

Theme: "Evangelism & Missions at Your Doorstep"

Date: February 20-21, 2004

Place: Lake Tiak O'Khata, Louisville, Miss.

Motel Registration: Call Lake Tiak O'Khata to make your motel reservations: 888.845.6151. A block of rooms is being held until January 31.

RETREAT COSTS (LAKE TIAK O'KHATA)

(Includes one night's lodging and three meals.)

\$92.12 for single occupancy
\$68.03 per person for double occupancy
\$57.92 per person for triple occupancy
\$53.11 per person for quad occupancy

SPONSORS:

The Pastor/Leadership Development Department of the MBCB and the Mississippi Council on Bivo Ministries are sponsoring this event.

AGENDA

Friday, February 20

5:30 p.m. Registration and Fellowship
6 p.m. Dinner
7 p.m. Celebration and Worship
Guest Speaker - Sonny Adkins
8:45 p.m. Fellowship (pie and coffee)
*Arrive when you are able to join us.

Saturday, February 21

8:30 a.m. Celebration and Worship
9:30 a.m. Break...fellowship
10 a.m. Breakout sessions (pick one)
Sermon Planning on the Run
Planning Good Mission Trips
Starting Churches and Missions
Teaching Believers to Witness
Wives Support and Fellowship
11:05 Breakout sessions repeated
12:00 Lunch

Convention leaders participating:
Jason Carlisle, IMB, Richmond Va.
Sonny Atkins, MBCB, Director - Evangelism
David Alexander, MBCB, Consultant - Church Planting
Matt Buckles, MBCB, Director - Pastor/Leadership Development

For more information, contact Matt Buckles, phone: 800.748.1651, x308,
E-mail: mbuckles@mbcb.org, Fax: 601.714.7426

Please take a moment to send a card to encourage the children of our missionaries!

3-01 Miss Laura Wingo
Parents: Floyd and Sylvia

6-95 Miss Erin T. DeMars
Parents: Guy & Cindy

7-92 Mr. Nathanael C. Packard
Parents: Michael & Sabrina

9-82 Mr. David Perkins
Parents: John & Sarah

9-84 Mr. Charles R. Wilkins
Parents: David & Jana

13-95 Miss Mollie S. Foster
Parents: Michael & Miranda

15-97 Miss Abigail R. Hewitt
Parents: Earl and Ramona

20-89 Mr. Matthew A. Crocker
Parents: George & Ginger

24-89 Miss Robyn L. Kyzar
Parents: John & Melinda

29-88 Mr. Jason R. Brown
Parents: John & Claudia

31-93 Miss Grace M. Holyfield
Parents: Michael & Patricia

PLEASE NOTE

Church members may send a package of cards altogether; cards do not have to be sent individually to Stewardship.

For security, cards will be forwarded.

Please send all to:

Child's name
and parent's name
MBCB Stewardship Dept.
PO Box 530
Jackson MS 39205

HOUSE TOPS

Su
DA
Sudar
Christ
author
ning
vice re
Sudar
Direct
makes
al tra
fleeing
disast
el Bas
Ma
withi
ated w
Roma
Sudar
"Th
placed
places
one so
them
those
want
As
ing ba
areas
some
ished
ted pl
are re
Sou
their c
center
non-g
windy
notab
Sou
destr
and l
tures
churc
demo
Natio
cited
An
been
aroun
some
given
water
shelte
sourc
Th
shelte
and th
Vi
WA
Vietn
stepp
perse
Chris

Life
mini-l

JANUA

Sudan Christians displaced by government programs

DAKAR, Senegal (BP) — Thousands of Sudanese families and number of Christian churches have been uprooted by authorities in an ongoing urban re-planning exercise, Compass Direct news service reported Dec. 29. Citing sources in the Sudanese capital of Khartoum, Compass Direct reported that more than 10 makeshift worship centers and a vocational training center erected by Christians fleeing two decades of civil war or natural disaster have been demolished at the Wad el Bashier camp in West Omdurman.

Many of the structures were targeted within the last two months; some are affiliated with the Anglican, African Inland, and Roman Catholic churches, as well as the Sudan Church of Christ, the sources said.

"These structures have value for the displaced Christians who put them up as places of worship," Compass Direct quoted one source as saying. "Those who knock them down are tampering with the faith of those believers, because the first thing they want to do is put up a house of the Lord."

As part of urban planning policies dating back to the early 1990s, poor residential areas in and around the camp, including some squatter camps, are being demolished and residents are slowly being allotted plots of land. But in many cases, they are rendered homeless for several months.

Sources noted that authorities step up their demolition of churches, schools, health centers, and training facilities erected by non-governmental organizations in the windy and cool winter months and most notably just prior to the Christmas season.

Some mosques also have been destroyed, as have most latrines, shops, and bakeries. Brick-and-concrete structures, however, such as the main Catholic church in the area, are not expected to be demolished, according to a recent United Nations report on conditions in the camp cited by Compass Direct.

An estimated 15,300 households have been affected by demolition in the areas around the camp, a temporary home to some 50,000 Sudanese. The people are given a "deserted piece of land" without a water supply, where they put up their own shelter and struggle to find medical care, sources told Compass Direct.

The U.N. report noted that almost 7,500 shelters, houses and latrines will be affected and that the current plan is to demolish the



entire area before allocating new plots, rather than carry out the demolition in incremental steps as was the case in the past.

Due to conflict and natural disasters, Sudan now hosts Africa's largest displaced population, currently estimated at more than four million people. Most of the people have settled throughout urban areas in Khartoum, Omdurman, and Bahri, and in four government-designated camps around Khartoum and Omdurman.

Most of the displaced are from southern Sudan or the Nuba mountains and include such ethnic groups as Baggara, Bari, Dinka, Fur, Nuer, Shilluk, Zagawa, and Zandi. The U.N. report noted that the average household contains around seven members and more than 90% live below the poverty line.

Compass Direct also recounted that American evangelist Franklin Graham, president of the international relief organization Samaritan's Purse, met Sudanese President Omar el-Bashir on Dec. 8 when the president invited Graham to the capital.

"The problems of religious freedom have been tied to the war," El-Bashir said. "As soon as the war is over, the pressure against Christians will be over. We have to be sure that the freedom of religion of Christians is not less than the freedom of Islam."

"We will take the responsibility to rebuild the churches in this country," El-Bashir added. "We welcome you who have come through the back door for years [meaning southern Sudan] to come through the front door now."

Graham, an outspoken critic of the Sudanese government's record of religious liberty, was on his third trip to Sudan this year but his first to Khartoum. "I hope as peace comes to your nation, that equality will come and that Christians will be able to worship as Muslims can," Graham told his host. "Muslims and Christians can live together peaceably, and I believe that pleases God."

During his trip to Sudan, Graham delivered 60,000 Christmas gift boxes to Sudanese children.

UNDER PERSECUTION — Sudanese Christians stand in the charred outline of the Christian church at Tali, which was completely destroyed several years ago by an as-yet unsolved bombing. Demolition of Christian churches and the dispersal of the churches' members in the African country has grown increasingly severe in recent months. (BP photo)

Vietnam initiates new campaign against churches

WASHINGTON (BP) — threatening to murder their spiritual leaders, Freedom House's Center for Religious Freedom in Washington reported on Dec. 30.

Freedom House recounted that sources in Vietnam reported 19 police agents destroyed Hmong Christian house churches in mid-December in four villages in Ta Tong Commune, located in the Muong Te District of Lai Chau Province.

Freedom House also received reports that high-level authorities in Vietnam's northwest Lai Chau Province are openly threatening to "kill all Christian leaders." Vietnam's Hmong Christians have long experienced official persecution because of their faith.

Freedom House reported the beating deaths by police of three Hmong Christians earlier in the year, including a 10-year-old child of a church leader sought for arrest.

Nina Shea, director of Freedom House's Center for Religious Freedom, said in a news release, "After the

numerous incidents of persecution reported against the Hmong Christians this year — culminating with the crack-down against their house churches and death threats against their leaders just this month — the U.S. State Department should not hesitate to designate Vietnam a 'country of particular concern' (CPC) under the International Religious Freedom Act."

On Dec. 4, the Center for Religious Freedom reported the arrest of Hmong leader Ma Van Bay in the Central Highlands' Binh Phuoc Province. Later reports from the region in December indicate his arrest prompted other Hmong Christian leaders in the region to go into hiding. Government officials also are reported to be threatening Central Highlands believers with death.

15-Passenger Van Safety is Big News these Days!

LifeWay has the solution—a 15-passenger mini-bus that meets Federal safety standards.



- Mini Bus
- 15 Passengers
- 2.1 Traction
- Center Air
- Low Floor Step
- Hard Roof
- Longer Wheelbase
- Dual Rear Wheels
- Steel Construction

- **SETUP COSTS**
- How much financial help do you need?
- Insurance rates are going up!
- Legal matters are on the rise. "Remember the last one?"
- Some states have strict, not mandatory replacement deadlines in sales.
- Charitable Organizations and Child Transportation Businesses are at Risk!

1-800-370-6180
carpenterbus.com

LifeWay
CHURCH BUSES
Carpenter Bus Sales, Inc.
Nation's #1 Church Bus Dealer

JUST FOR THE RECORD



Terry Long has joined the faculty of Walk Thru the Bible Ministries, Atlanta, Ga., as an instructor of Walk Thru the Old Testament Seminars. Walk Thru the Bible, founded by Bruce Wilkinson, offers seminars in bible study, marriage, family enrichment, personal development, spiritual renewal, and teacher training. Long is a graduate of William Carey College, NOBTS, and Southern Baptist School for Biblical Studies. He has pastored in Pascagoula, Picayune, Winona, and Lucedale, and currently serves as interim pastor at Lilly Orchard Church, Jackson County. Long can be contacted at (251) 645-4948, or email terry-long6@netzero.com.



RAs of Lexie Church, Tylertown

The RAs of Lexie Church, Tylertown, collected food on World Hunger Day. Pictured are those who went to the food pantry, (from left, front) Canyon Van Dan, Maggie Smith, Jace Conerly, (middle) Benjamin Griffin, Russ Smith, (back) Robert Van Dan, and Joel Hinson.

The GAs (pictured) of Leesburg Church, Morton, were recently presented with their badges. Ernie Myers is interim pastor.

A group from the Carroll and Montgomery Associations went on a mission trip to Atlanta, to work with Operation Christmas Child in December. Pictured (from left, front) are Joan and



GAs of Leesburg Church, Morton



Mission Team from Carroll and Montgomery Association

Allen Dunn, (back) Charles James, Gamble, and Frank Harmon, MBCB. and Cleo Elliott, Mae and Joe Hardin, Betty Furgerson, Gloria Moore, and Eloise and Bill Brunson.

Sylvarena Church, Raleigh, ordained **John W. Gamble** as deacon on December 7. Pictured (from left) are Charles

Cliff Temple Church, Natchez, has called **Arron McGueffee**, New Orleans, La., as pastor effective December 14. McGueffee is a graduate of NOBTS.

First Church, Greenwood, has called **Joe Pate** as pastor. Pate comes from Parkway Church, Kosciusko.

Cedar View Church, Olive Branch, will hold a community sing January 17 at 6 p.m. featuring The Almost Famous Carl Crain Singers. Call (662) 895-2661.

Oakhill, Pontotoc: Revival Jan. 8-11; Thurs.-Sat., 7 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m.; Chili Graham, Lafayette, La., evangelist; Dean Johnson, David Willard, Darla Robinson, and Chris Craven, music; Kevin Wallace, interim pastor.

Wyatte, Senatobia: Revival Jan. 11-14; 7 p.m. nightly; Jim Holcomb, evangelist; Ron Norton, music; Scott Rogers, pastor.

The Children's Choir of **Clarke-Venable Church, Decatur**, recently presented a Christmas musical, The S.O.C.C.E.R. Team. Seventy-one participated in the musical. Choir leaders are Alex Craft, Sherry Craft, Charlotte Smith, Charlotte Griffin, Joy Munn, Kay Chambers, Libby Nance, and Vickie Thorne. The set design was by Eddie and Charlotte Smith. The sound engineer was Danny Cherry.

OBITUARY



O. H. Petty, age 85, of Petal, died October 15 at Wesley Medical Center in Hattiesburg.

Petty

Services were held at Hulett-Winstead Funeral Home with burial in Green's Creek Cemetery.

Petty was a retired minister and piano technician. He was a Mason and a member of Green's Creek Church, Petal.

Survivors include his wife, Muriel Petty; two daughters, Peggy Frierson and Hilda Barnes; one stepson, Jr. Ladner; one stepdaughter, Marilyn L. Williams; one grandchild; two great-grandchildren; and two step-grandchildren.

Call for free BROCHURE **BAPTISTRIES HEATERS, PUMPS FACTORY DIRECT** TOLL FREE 1-800-251-0679 www.fiberglasschurchprod.com FIBERGLASS BAPTISTRY CO. 3511 HIXSON PIKE • CHATTANOOGA, TN 37415



James, Gamble, and Harmon



Children's Choir of Clarke-Venable, Decatur

CLASSIFIED ADS

RATE: 60 cents per word, minimum of ten words; maximum of fifty words. No blind ads. ONLY WRITTEN ADS.

FINALLY AFFORDABLE HEALTH Insurance for the self employed. Call (662) 568-3482. *Underwritten by MEGA Life & Health Insurance Company. M/COMB0008.

PIANO, GRAND KNABE, 6' 1". EBONY, PDS disc system with record, modulate, orchestra. Superb action and tone. Absolutely new condition. A \$17,000 value at \$14,500. Call Mike at (601) 267-8480. Negotiable.

CHRIST-CENTERED CHILDREN'S HOME with Presbyterian heritage in NE Miss., providing long-term care for sibling groups. Seeks couples to serve as houseparents. Commitment to Christ and to children essential. Liberal benefit package. Contact Dr. Bob Schwanebeck at Palmer Home for Children at (662) 328-5704, ext. 113 or bschwanebeck@palmerhome.org.

DIRECTOR OF MISSIONS - MOBILE Baptist Association is currently receiving resumes for the Director of Missions position. Send to: Mobile Baptist Association, attn: personnel committee, DOM, 616

Azalea Road, Mobile, Alabama 36609. **WEDDING!!! PRICED PROFESSIONALS? TOO EXPENSIVE?** Let me give you an estimate. Pat Barnes (601) 856-7156. barn1342@bellsouth.net.

MAJOR MEDICAL INSURANCE: Too expensive? To view coverage for major illnesses only and/or discounted drugs. Pat Barnes (601) 856-7156, Mutual of Omaha. Email: barn1342@bellsouth.net.

FULL-TIME YOUTH PASTOR, FBC Vidalia. Send resumes to 100 Hickory Street, Vidalia, LA 71373. Or email youthpastor@fbcvidalia.com.

MUSICIAN FOR RECREATION DIRECTOR qualifications. Degree in music or music therapy preferred. Recreation, recreation therapy, art degrees with musical abilities also considered. Competitive pay and benefits with flexible hours. Contact Human Resources Director, Rolling Hills Center, "Supporting the Mentally Retarded and Developmentally Disabled", 200 Womack Road, Starkville, MS 39759. Phone (662) 323-9183 or email

rollinghillscenter@yahoo.com. **LIBRARIAN WITH MLS DEGREE.** MS Baptist Historical Collection, Mississippi College. Details on MC website: <http://www.mc.edu/administration/PER/jobs.html> or contact Mrs. Susan Newman, chair, search committee (601) 925-3279.

AMERICA'S FASTEST GROWING Christian long distance company. 4.9/minute, no monthly fees. No codes or restrictions, 6 second billing. 250,000 happy customers. Toll-free (866) 587-8346 or www.covenantphoneservice.com.

TRAVEL ENGLAND, IRELAND, Scotland and Wales May 25-June 9, 2004. Call Bill and Margarita Stanford at (601) 924-1593 for a brochure describing 16 exciting days rich in history, culture, religious roots and hospitality.

HOPPER GLASS STUDIO, CUSTOM church windows, reworking and repair, Columbus/Jackson, (877) 477-1899.

CHURCH PEW UPHOLSTERY, free estimates. Davis Upholstery, Quitman, Miss., phone (601) 776-6617.

FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

God Empowers

1 Samuel 17:4, 8-11, 32, 37-40, 45-50

By Ken Anderson

The movie Hoosiers is a classic story of the underdog overcoming seemingly insurmountable difficulties. The movie is based on the 1950-52 Hickory Huskers, a small school in Indiana with only eight players on their basketball team. Yet they defied all odds and marched to the state title. The story of David and Goliath in our culture has become a symbol of one who is given the least chance of winning becoming the victor. The theme of this lesson is not that human power and bravery can overcome difficulties but that God empowers in difficult times.

During this period of history the Philistines were a constant enemy of Israel. In our text, the Philistines bounced back from a defeat by Israel and renewed their efforts to become the vic-

tors. The two armies were encamped on opposite sides of a valley (v. 3). Goliath challenged Israel to send out their champion in a winner-take-all duel (vs. 8-10).

Goliath, standing nine feet tall, must have been an awesome and frightful figure to behold (v. 4). His personal arsenal and armament were very impressive. Joe O. Lewis wrote that "the armor consisted of a helmet, a chainlike coat of mail, and metal leg guards (greaves). Goliath also had metal weapons: a sword, a javelin (a small spear), and a heavy spear with a head weighing as much as a sixteen pound hammer." (LBBC p. 47)

David answered Goliath's challenge over the objections and reservations of his oldest brother Eliab and King Saul. David, with a staff and sling, faced the giant warrior Goliath (vs. 28, 33). The



Anderson

fact that Goliath had a warrior's reputation from his youth did not deter David's zeal (v. 33). David also had a reputation for killing a lion and a bear. But the difference in David's experiences was that the Lord delivered him from the animals and God would deliver him from the

Philistines (v. 37).

The physical contrast between them must have been striking, but the lesson last week emphasized, outward appearances can be deceiving. It is the classic showdown of the underdog and the superior, obvious winner.

David made it clear to Goliath and Israel that God would give the victory. For David, Goliath's arsenal of weapons was no match for one who came in the name of the Lord. Zechariah sounded a similar message, "not by might, not by power, but by the Spirit, said the Lord of host" (Zechariah 4:6). The victory would communicate to all the earth that "there is a God in Israel." (vs. 45, 46)

David's skill with a sling and

stone became a formidable weapon. Some scholars present the position that the stone David hurled only stunned Goliath giving him time to decapitate Goliath. Others declare that the one stone hurled from David's sling killed the giant on impact. Regardless of the debate, David, the underdog, was victorious over seemingly overwhelming difficulties.

INSIGHTS FROM THE TEXT:

All experience circumstances that seem overwhelming. Yet believers can rely on the truth that God is in control and empowers his children with strength beyond their own capacities. Believers can depend on God's strength in difficult times.

God's power in trials does not necessarily eliminate the fear and concern surrounding them but his power does enable believers to weather their storm. As one writer put it, "Sometimes God calms the believer's storm and at other times, he calms the believer."

Imagine the hours David spent tending the sheep in solitary places. David must have

honed his skills with the sling during the boring hours in the fields. Did he wonder sometimes whether he was wasting his time slinging rocks? That skill, developed in quiet places, led David to a stunning victory as he faced his giant. Someone has said: "God knows the giants in our lives. As He had prepared David for the day when he would meet his giant, so He prepares us for those days when we must conquer ours."

Some experience giants so huge that they seem insurmountable. Yet, with prayers, support, and caring friends, the giant begins to shrink. One's relationship with God can enable believers to diminish the size of the giant.

Both armies on that day saw a mismatch between David and Goliath. That was clearly evident to their eyes, but they did not see what God saw. God knows how giants fall. He can empower believers in difficult times to cope with their giants or see them defeated.

Anderson is pastor emeritus of First Church, Salttillo.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Benefits of Wisdom

Proverbs 1:20-22,29-33; 2:5-9,11-12,16,20; 3:1-2,4-6

By Ann Maniscalco

My "kids" are both in their 30s, but I still find myself wanting to offer advice and admonition. Having a couple of decades more of life experiences than they, I want to spare them some heartache and heartburn by hopefully giving them some wise options on "been there — done that" scenarios.

Loving parents desire the best life possible for their offspring. Following the way of wisdom — God's wisdom — will ensure us of experiencing more of the blessedness of life, and less of the disappointments and agonies brought about by wrong choices.

AVAILABILITY OF WISDOM (PROV. 1:20-22):

A literary device known as personification is used in these verses, giving the attributes of a person to the abstract concept of "wisdom."

We see "her" in the highways and byways, "[raising] her voice" to be heard. Wisdom calls to "foolish ones", "mockers" and "fools", asking them how long they will continue to ignore, mock and reject the teachings and principles she freely offers. Notice the word, "commotion." With so many voices clamoring for attention in today's world, the wise person must compare what he or she hears and learns with the eternally dependable truths of Scripture (see Isaiah 40:8 and John 17:17). Even though we see the loud, piercing call of wisdom here, sensitive believers must also carefully listen for the "gentle whisper" of the voice of God (1 Kings 19:12).

CONSEQUENCES OF REJECTING WISDOM (PROV. 1:29-32):

When studying these scriptures, I was drawn back to last week's study. Proverbs 1:7-19



Maniscalco

focused on the value of choosing wisdom, and the hazards awaiting those who turn their backs on it. I recalled hearing of an elderly pastor relaying his method for successful preaching this way: "I tell them what I'm going to tell them, then I tell them, and then I tell them what I

told them." When something is reiterated in a slightly different manner in Scripture (as the contrasts in chapter 1 are), Bible students realize the truths revealed are worthy of extra emphasis and careful consideration. (Jesus used a similar teaching method with the sheep, coin and son in Luke 15.) To accurately see the emphasis, it would be beneficial to read the first 3 chapters of Proverbs at one sitting.

Notice the words describing the four-fold rejection of wisdom's ways by the self-sufficient ones in verse 29: "hated", "didn't choose", "not interested", and "rejected." Verses 31-32 show the disastrous results of these choices. We don't have to look far to see such implications today in

the damage and destruction brought about by sex outside of marriage, alcoholism, illegal drug use, breaking the law, following evil desires and such. The apostle Paul warned Timothy, his young son in the faith, to "flee the evil desires of youth" and to "pursue righteousness" (2 Timothy 2:22). Many today bring ruin and shame on themselves and their families by doing the reverse.

BENEFITS OF RECEIVING WISDOM (PROV. 1:33; 2:5-9,11-12,16,20; 3:1-2, 4-6):

After warning readers of the ruinous effects of rejecting her, "Wisdom" reminds readers of the life they can expect by choosing to "listen to [her]" (vs. 33).

In chapter 2, the father builds for his son a solid foundation of following the Lord and His teachings. The way of wisdom is always the way of uprightness and integrity (vs. 7). To such followers, God grants success (also translated "victory" or "sound judgment"), protection, understanding, discretion, strength to shun evil, and the respect of others. The Lord's commands are not meant to restrict us, but to

bring "many days, a full life, and well-being" (Prov. 3:2).

Like the "wise man who [builds] his house on the rock", following the teachings of the Lord will provide a life that, although mighty storms of adversity may buffet it, will stand strong because "it [has] its foundation on the rock" (Matt. 7:24-25).

Our God knows what is best for us; His plans are far superior to ours, and he sees our past, present and future in a glance. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways" (Isaiah 55:8-9). How foolish we are to attempt to direct our own lives! A favorite Scripture, Proverbs 3:5-6 shows a much better way. Instead of depending on our own shortsighted understanding, we should always "Trust in the Lord" completely, being confident He will "guide [us] on the right paths."

Maniscalco is member of First Church, Ocean Springs.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats,



no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be

clear, sharp, and well-lighted.

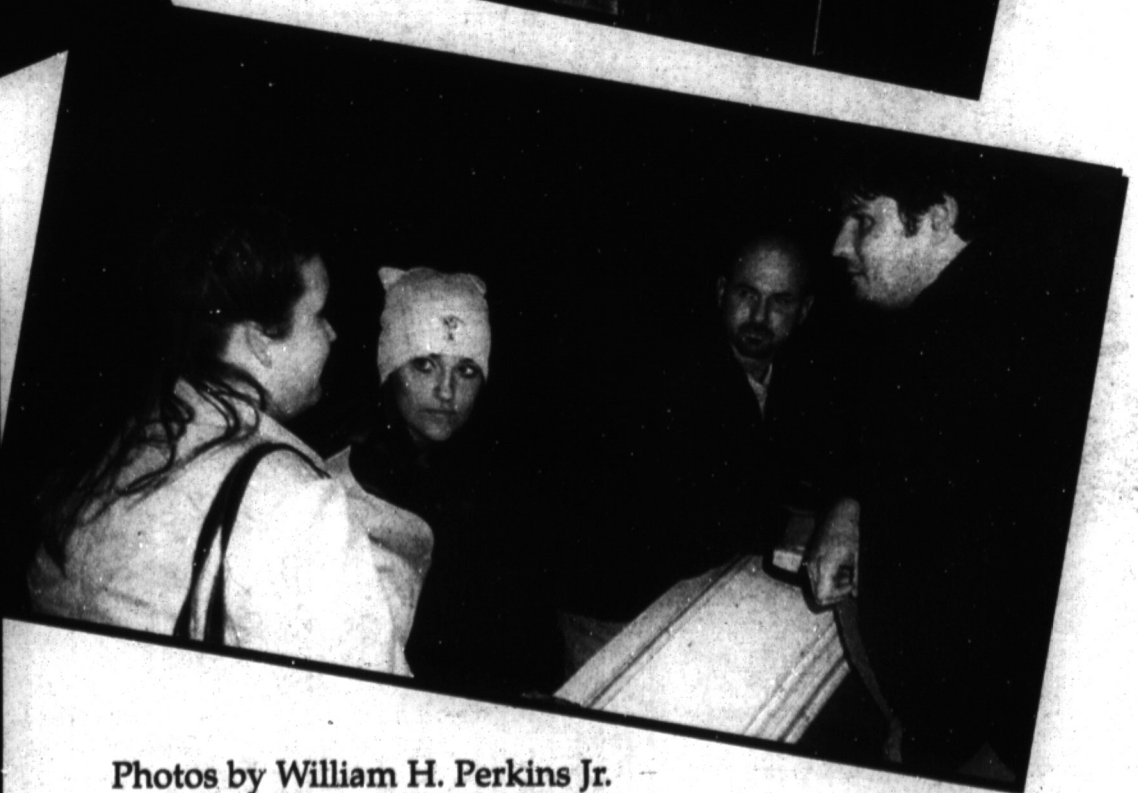
All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. Requests to return photographs must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbc.org

MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST YOUTH EVANGELISM CONFERENCE

DECEMBER 29-30, 2003 • MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE



Photos by William H. Perkins Jr.